

THE
LIAR,

COMEDY.

IN THREE ACTS.

Sumner Jones
Ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,

Postrema ne medio, medio ne discrepat inum.

HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for J. COOKE, at Shakespear's Head,
in Pater-noster-Row. 1763.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir WILLIAM FRONTLESS.

Sir JOHN TRADELOVE.

Young FRONTLESS.

SAUNTER.

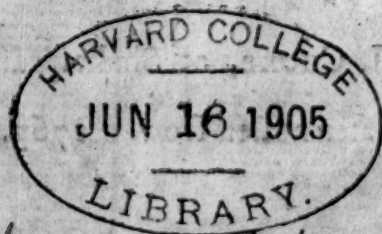
SHIFTWELL.

JOHN.

W O M E N.

SOPHIA.

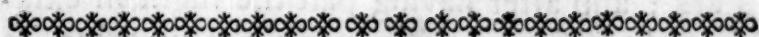
BETTY.



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THE
L I A R,
A
F A R C E.



A C T I. S C E N E I.

Young Frontless meeting Saunter in St. James's Park.

Young FRONTLESS.

CHARLES, how do you do?

Saunter. Not very well.—I don't know what ails me.—I think the weather does not agree with me.

Young Front. What, always complaining of the climate! If you had pass'd the night in as agreeable a manner as I did, you would not be in the spleen this morning.

Saunter. From your manner of expressing yourself, I take it for granted, that the mysterious

B

terious Veil of Love must conceal this joyous scene from me.

Young *Front*. Not at all; I love to make my friends partakers of my joy. You must know then, the Countess of Cravit, who not long since took a particular fancy to me, I don't know for what, sent me a card, desiring my company for the evening. We supped together, tête à tête, and the remainder of the night we past in joys, in extasies, too fierce to last for ever. Satiated with this luscious banquet, I'm come to breathe the fresh air of the Park; and after having past the night in extasy and transport, trifle away the morning as well as I can.

Saunter. Frontless, you are a happy man; but six months in town, and you have made conquests already! But superior merit—

Front. I understand you well enough, Sir Sneerer; you think me so much a coxcomb as to boast of favours which I never received: but if I should produce a letter from the Countess, would you call the testimony of your own eyes in question?

Saunter. That's another part of speech.

Young *Front*. Come, read this, and then suspect my veracity if you can. (*Gives him a card*).

(*Saunter reads*). “The Countess of Cravit's
“compliments to Mr. Frontless, and would
“be glad of his company this evening at
“six

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“fix o’clock.”—(*after a pause*) This is certainly the Countess’s writing, for I have seen letters of her’s before. All the world knows she is a Demi-Rep.—A circumstance which greatly corroborates your testimony: so that, having summed up the evidence on both sides, I think I must find the Countess guilty, and acquit you. Farewel. I’ll go, and while away an hour at the Coffee-House. I am never long easy in one place. [*Exit. Saunter.*]

S C E N E I I.

Young Frontless, solus.

Front. So—He believes me at last,—and that’s enough for me.—The reputation of success in an amour, appears to me more desirable than success itself.—In order to obtain success, a man must be at some pains,—but the world is very credulous, and to tell lies very easy—at least I find it so, for that is the natural bent of my Genius. In the present age, a young fellow is despis’d, if he is not thought to be well receiv’d by the Ladies; and I am determin’d to pass for a successful lover, tho’ thousands of reputations should bleed for it. But who have we here? By the Lord, my Father’s man John. I am afraid the old Gentleman is come to town.

SCENE III.

Young Frontless, and John.

Young Front. What, John, is it you? I did not expect to see you in London.

John. Your Honour,—old John's so glad to see you again, he could almost shed tears of joy.—To be sure, Sir William will be overjoy'd when you meet.—God bless me, Sir, this London is a strange place; I have not been a week in it, and I have been four or five times in danger of my life already.

Young Front. Faith I don't doubt it; I have been here but six months, and in that time I have fought five or six score duels.

John. Dear heart! they must be bloody-minded people: it was God's mercy that you were never killed, Sir.

Young Front. The last time I had a fair escape, for my adversary understood the sword much better than I, tho' few understand it better.

John. Why, Sir, you never learn'd to fence in the country.

Young Front. Aye, but since my coming to town, I learn'd the whole science of defence in a week's time: I easily learn whatever I set my mind to.

John. You had always a very ready wit, Sir.

Young Front. Well, but I was telling you of the duel I fought.—It was with my Lord
—my

—my Lord,—hang him, I can't think of his name just now.—It happen'd out a little oddly.—I had accidentally made an acquaintance with a Lady at the Play-House, and she taking a liking to me, gave me a general invitation to visit her, at her lodgings.—You may be sure I did not decline the offer; so as I was coming out one day, after having drank a dish of tea with her in private, who should I meet but his Lordship, who, in a surly tone of voice, ask'd me, what business I had there? I was only paying a visit to the Lady, says I. The Lady—Zounds, Sir, what business had you with the Lady?—Nothing but what I paid for, by G-d, says I. Draw, says he; so to it we went, and he would certainly have disarm'd me, but luckily his foot slipped, so I pressed him home, and soon laying him flat upon his back, made the best of my way.

John. You had great luck, Sir.

Young Front. I have had much greater luck since I came to London, John. Would you think it, I have won 4000 l. at the hazard-table within these six months?

John. That's good news, Sir. Sir William will be glad to hear of that; he thinks you can never be rich enough, and is come to town to marry you to a young Lady, who is a very great fortune.

Young Front. (aside) That's bad news for me tho'—I have already conceiv'd a serious passion

passion for a Lady, to whom I have not yet had an opportunity of explaining my sentiments. (*to John*) I am surpris'd, John, that Sir William should come to town so abruptly, without writing to apprise me of his coming.

John. Please your honour, I know nothing at all about that; but Sir William desired me this morning, to call at your lodgings in Pall-mall, and let you know that he wanted to see you to-day, at his house in Berkley-square, about an affair of importance.

Young Front. I shall call upon him without fail. You may leave me now. [*Ex. John.*]

Front. solus. How this country-booby swallowed all the improbable lies I told him! I can hardly help thinking that I am possessed of a Patent for Lying, since whatever I say is believ'd. My case is the very reverse of that of the Prophetess Cassandra, who was never believed by the Trojans, tho' she always spoke the truth; for hitherto I have always had the good fortune to be believed, tho' I never spoke a word of truth in my life. But I must now think of some stratagem to ward off this marriage with which I am threatened. The charms of a young Lady, whom I have seen several times in the side-boxes at Covent-Garden, have made so deep an impression upon my heart, that I am not at all disposed to think of a wife, especially one chosen by my father, who, I
take

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take it for granted, must be some country-doll, whom he has pitched upon merely for the sake of her fortune. [*Ex. Young Front.*]

S C E N E I V.

An apartment in the house of Sir William Frontless, in Berkley-square.

Sir William solus.

Sir William. This boy of mine gives me great uneasiness, as he always discovered something of a wild turn whilst at Oxford, and even at my own seat in the country I have been very apprehensive lest he should follow the example of the bucks and bloods of this town. I have therefore thought of the best remedy, and am not without hopes of reclaiming him. He shall marry Sophia, the daughter of my worthy friend Sir John Trade-love; and as her beauty is equal to her fortune, I doubt not but she will in a short time fix his roving inclination. But here he comes.

S C E N E V.

Sir William Frontless, Young Frontless.

Young Front. Your blessing, Sir.

Sir Will. You have it, son; and I hope your discreet conduct will shew you worthy of a father as indulgent as I have been. Well, how do you like London?

Young

Young Front. Why, to tell the truth, I don't like it at all; the hurry and bustle of it displeases me, and I regret the tranquillity of the country.

Sir Will. How have you past your time here?

Young Front. In as retir'd a manner as ever I did in the country; I spend the greatest part of the day at home in reading the classics, and in the evening I go to the play.

Sir Will. I can't but approve of so sober and regular a life; and as I could never lose sight of your welfare, I have prevail'd upon Sir John Tradelove to consent to your marriage with his daughter Sophia; she is a great fortune, and I am sure you can have no objection to her person.

Young Front. Sir, I return you thanks for your parental care; but I am already as good as contracted to a young lady of 20,000 l. fortune, and have good hopes of obtaining her father's consent.

Sir Will. (*aside*) I hope this is true, for Sophia's portion does not amount to half the sum. (*To Young Front.*) You know I have been always an indulgent father to you, and would, by no means, put any constraint upon your inclinations. But pray who is this young Lady?

Young Front. Her name is Lindamira; her father, who is an East-India merchant, lives near the Royal Exchange.

Sir Will.

THE LIAR.

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Sir Will. What's the father's name?

Young Front. (*after a pause*) His name—
his name—Tomlinson.

Sir Will. I don't know that I ever heard of him. But make it your endeavour to obtain his consent, and you may depend upon mine. I would not willingly thwart your inclinations when they do not run counter to your interest. I shall therefore wait upon Sir John Trade-love, and let him know how you stand affected.
[*Exit Sir Will.*]

SCENE VI.

Young Frontless, solus.

Young Front. Well, to be sure, there was never a more successful liar; whatever I say is sure of being believ'd, I think I must at last set up for a professor of the art of political lying. But this is no time to boast of my talents, 'tis time to avail myself of them. However, as two heads are better than one, I think it would not be amiss, if I was to consult Dick Shiftwell; that fellow has the best knack at telling a lie of any man in England except myself, and knows how to manage an intrigue much better than some Statesmen know how to carry on a political scheme.

[*Exit Frontless.*]

C SENE

SCENE VII.

An apartment in the house of Sir John Tradelove.

Sir John Tradelove and Sir William Frontles.

Sir John Trade. Sir William, I highly approve of your open and generous proceeding; as your son's affections are pre-engag'd, you act a fair and honest part in apprising me of it. I am as much against laying any constraint upon the inclinations of children in affairs of this nature, as you are yourself, and would not, for the world, have my daughter marry a man, who had already dispos'd of his heart to another.

Sir Will. If I had not known your noble and generous way of thinking, I should have been under some confusion at addressing you upon this occasion.

Sir John. I am never offended at hearing what's contrary to my inclination, when I know the person who tells it has my own interest in view. But did not your son tell you the name of the Lady whose charms had captivated his heart?

Sir Will. He did; her name is Lindamira Tomlinson; she is daughter to Mr. Tomlinson, a rich East-India merchant.

Sir John. Sir William, there must be some mistake

mistake here; there is no East-India merchant of the name you mention.

Sir *Will.* How! are you sure of that?

Sir *John.* Very positive; there is not a merchant of any eminence in town that I am not acquainted with; and certain I am, that there is no East-India merchant of the name of Tomlinson.

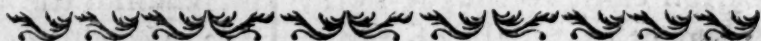
Sir *Will.* Why, then, very likely my memory fails me; to be sure I have the most treacherous memory in the world—Jack has often put me in mind of things that were so totally banished from it, that they did not leave a trace behind.—I'll tell you a remarkable instance of it. About four years ago, a person came to me at York, and claim'd the payment of a debt of fifty pounds, which he said he had lent me the last time I was at York, which was about a twelve-month before. I could recollect nothing at all of the matter; but Jack, who happened to be present, recall'd so many circumstances to my memory, and made the thing so plain, that I at last paid the money, tho' I could not possibly recollect that I had ever seen the person before.

Sir *John (aside)* That money went into Jack's pocket. I begin to smell a rat (*to Sir Will.*) Sir William, I am afraid your good nature is impos'd upon. I doubt your son has reserves with you, which he should by no means have with so indulgent a father.

Sir *Will.* No, no, my boy is the best boy in the world—quite open and sincere—he never hides any thing from me. I educated him as the Persians educated their children in the time of Cyrus. I taught him to tell the truth above all things, and I really believe he would not tell a lie for any consideration. To be sure he's a little wild; but that is excusable in a young man, and he may be easily reclaim'd.

If we youth's Foibles with indulgence view,
Th' infirmities of age they'll pardon too.

End of A C T the First.



ACT II. SCENE I.

Young Frontless's Lodgings in Pall-Mall.

Young Frontless and Shiftwell.

Young FRONTLESS.

SHIFTWELL, I never in my life stood more in need of your advice than at present. I am desperately in love with a young Lady, without knowing where she lives, who are her parents, or whether she is maid, widow, or wife.

Shift.

Shift. And perhaps she may at the same time be as much in love with you, without knowing whether you are married, or a batchelor, a sober, virtuous young Gentleman, or a Rake.

Young Front. Would to heaven she was.—She is the only woman I ever conceived a serious passion for; and had you seen her, you would own that none but she is capable of inspiring one.

Shift. Now you are once upon this subject of the perfections of your mistress, you would willingly go on all day; but you know, Sir, I come here about business.—How can my agency be of use to you in this affair?

Young Front. First of all, Shiftwell, I'd have you get the best information you can, concerning her name, and place of abode.

Shift. Why surely, Sir, Love must have turn'd your head.—How is it possible I can find out the name or place of abode of a person I never saw?

Young Front. What you alledge, might be just with regard to another; but such is the beauty of her whom my soul adores, that she cannot long remain unknown. In fine, Shiftwell, keep a constant look-out at the Play-house, and when you see in the side-boxes a young Lady, whose beauty surpasses that of any woman you ever saw in your life, take it for granted that that's she; and for discovering

vering the other particulars, I leave that to your address.

Shift. Sir, these directions are too general, and seem to be suggested rather by the vehemence of your passion, than by your sober judgment. Alas! Sir, there is nothing more undetermin'd than the standard of beauty, and my idea of a face compleatly beautiful may be very different from your's. I once knew a very smart fellow, a philosopher, that asserted there was no such thing as beauty, and that men only agreed to prefer one set of features to another, and so by the force of habit came to be pleas'd only with that.

Young Front. Why, Shiftwell, you are a downright Metaphysician; how did you come by all this knowledge?

Shift. Though I had not the happiness of having a scholastic education, Sir, I think I know something. To be sure there is no place like London, to see things, and to learn. For my part, I am indebted for the little I know, to the Robin Hood Society; the society for free enquiry and debate, at the Queen's Arms, in Newgate-street, and some others. Lord, Sir, they talk surprisngly at these societies.

Young Front. Surprisngly indeed—I have sometimes been almost astonished at them.

Shift. But, Sir, let's come to the matter in hand; please to give me an exact account of your mistress, and I don't doubt but I may find her

her out, for a remarkably fine face has always something peculiarly distinguishing in it.

Young *Front.* Oh! Shiftwell! you lay a task upon me, which might make a Raphael shudder, and trembling, drop the pencil from his hand. How can description, how can the painter's toil, give an adequate idea of all the various beauties of that face. However, weak as my powers are, I shall attempt the description. Her age appears to be about nineteen; she is tall for that age, but rather slender, tho' exactly well-shap'd: but her face beggars all description. Her eyes are black, lively, and sparkling, and every glance seems to be an alarm to love. Her forehead is high, her face rather long, but all her features exactly regular; and her arch'd eye-brow may justly be compar'd to the bow of the fabled god of love. Her fine black hair, which she wears without powder, or any ornament, negligently tied behind, cannot be seen, without inspiring the breast of every beholder with transport; the Loves and Graces seem to sport in her tresses. She never wears a hoop, and for that reason the delicacy of her shape is the more easily discern'd.

Shift. Sir, you have said enough; from this description I perceive that I am your rival.

Young *Front.* How, Sirrah! my rival!

Shift. Sir, I saw just such another Lady

as you describe, a few nights ago, at Covent-Garden Play-house; and tho' I was in the One-shilling-gallery, and she in the Side-Box, the rays darted from her eyes, penetrated to my heart, and I am over head and ears in love with her. But don't be uneasy about that; I give up all my pretensions to her, and restore her to you, as Scipio restored the fair Iberian to her brother. Since I know who you mean, I shall shortly be able to give you information. So, Sir, you may depend upon my diligence and zeal.

Young Front. I dare say I may, Shiftwell; you are a Mercury, fit for Jove himself. But, for God's sake, endeavour to resemble Mercury in his expedition, as well as in his other qualities; every moment is an age to a lover.

Shift. Don't be uneasy, Sir, I won't let you languish long. [*Exit.* Shiftwell.]

S C E N E II.

Young Frontless, solus.

Young Front. I must certainly be in love in good earnest, for here have I spoke half an hour to Shiftwell, without telling one lie. My Father has promis'd not to thwart my inclinations in this affair, that's one happiness. But then the young Lady has a father too, and if he should with-hold his consent, I should be greatly perplex'd. However, 'tis time
enough

enough to think of that when I have discover'd my fair incognito. But who comes here?

S C E N E I I I.

Young Frontless, and John.

Young Front. So, John, are you there?

John. I hope your Honour's well. Sir William sent me to you; he desires to speak with you directly.

Young Front. Let him know I'll wait upon him without delay, I should not have been so long without paying my respects to him, but an unlucky accident happen'd to me lately.

John. I am very sorry for that, Sir.

Young Front. It was not an affair of much consequence. As I was last night coming home to my lodgings, I heard a great outcry; and saw several persons in pursuit of a man, who slip'd into a by-ally, and made off. Whilst they were earnest in the pursuit, I happen'd to pass by, and was seized in mistake by one of the Tipstaves. I was immediately hurried to the Watch-house, and expected to be soon removed from thence to Newgate, when a Gentleman, who had been robb'd by the highwayman, whom I happened unluckily to resemble in shape and stature, enter'd and told the myrmidons, that I was a Gentleman of family, and fortune, and not the man

D

they

they were in quest of. Upon this the Tipstaves, quite crest-fallen, and trembling for fear of being prosecuted for false imprisonment, ask'd me pardon, in the humblest manner imaginable; and as I am not naturally of a litigious temper, I easily granted it. This troublesome affair, however, discompos'd and ruffled my spirits to such a degree, that I kept my chamber the whole day following.

John. God bless me, Sir, what accidents happen in this same London! there does not pass a day but I hear of something. For my part, I wish I was once well in the country again.

Young Front. John, tell Sir William I shall wait on him directly.

John. Yes, an' please your Honour.

[*Exit John.*]

SCENE IV.

Young Frontless, solus.

Young Front. I can't conceive the reason of my father's sending for me at this juncture. Perhaps he begins to suspect the truth of what I told him, when he propos'd marriage to me. 'Tis no great matter however, for if I am detected in one lie, I can soon invent another; I am inexhaustible in lies: and then
I have

I have an advantage over him, for he has always had a great opinion of my veracity.

[Exit young Front.]

S C E N E V.

A chamber in the house of Sir John Tradelove.

Sophia at her toilet, Betty waiting.

Betty. Lord, Madam, I'm surpriz'd to see such an alteration in you! When your father told you that you were shortly to be married, you seem'd quite melancholy; and now, that the marriage is broken off, you are quite lively and in spirits. Other Ladies desire nothing more than to be married; but the very name of husband gives you the vapours.

Sophia. A husband, Betty, is my detestation. I can't bear the thoughts of being married, when I consider what sort of lives some married women lead. Mrs. Fretful, tho' her husband married her for love, is now entirely neglected by him: he is always peevish and ill-humour'd in her company, tho' every where else the most agreeable and entertaining companion in the world.

Betty. O! Madam, such examples should not terrify you: if the ladies are sometimes neglected by their husbands, it is generally their own fault. The thing is this, Madam, they know the way to win him, but they

don't know the way to keep him. The way to keep him is the art that our sex should study.

Sophia. But my father would have married me to a man that I never saw in my life, that I could not bear the thought of. If ever I marry, I am resolv'd it shall be to a man of my own chusing: and, before I give him my hand, I must be very sure that I am possess'd of his heart.

Betty. Why, there you're in the right, Madam; to be sure one should always look before one leaps.

Sophia. Betty, I am quite tir'd of this old-fashion'd subject of marriage, let us talk of something else. I can't help being surpriz'd at the assurance of the young men of this age. For two or three different nights, a young gentleman gaz'd at me, so attentively, at the Play-house, that I was quite out of countenance.

Betty (aside). Perhaps my mistress's aversion to the propos'd match, may be owing to this spark—I'll soon dive to the bottom of the affair, or my name is not Betty. (*To Sophia*) Lord, Madam, the impudence of the young fellows of this town is unparallel'd: if I had been in the pit, I'll be whipt if I would not have given him a slap in the face.

Sophia. Nay, Betty, he did not seem to have any intention to offend.

Betty.

Betty. No intention to offend : Is it no offence, Madam, to stare a modest woman out of countenance in a public place? Well, of all things in the world, I can't abide these starers.

Sophia. Lord, Betty, there's no occasion for all this passion : the man had not the eyes of a basilisk, he did not kill me.

Betty (aside). He has made an impression upon her, I see. (*To Sophia*) Nay, Madam, if I had thought you would have taken the gentleman's part so warmly, I should not have spoken as I have done.

Sophia (blushing). I take the gentleman's part warmly ! Lord, Betty, how you talk.

Betty. Nay, Madam, I did not mean to offend you by any thing I said, no more than the gentleman meant to offend by gazing at you.

Sophia. You say that with a mysterious air, and seem to mean something.

Betty. Why then, to deal plainly with you, Madam, I do mean something : I perceive that this young gentleman has got a little way into your heart. Come, be honest, and own it ; a confidant is very necessary upon these occasions : and, I believe, I can give as good advice, in such a case as this, as any woman in England.

Sophia. Well, Betty, I will no longer deny what I perceive you are already convinced of. I will frankly own to you, that I beheld all
men

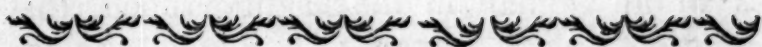
men with indifference till I saw this stranger at the Play-house; and since that time, I have felt emotions, before, unknown to my breast.

Betty. I'm glad to hear this. Well, if the gentleman ever opens his amorous battery before this house, he may depend upon finding a good friend in me.—I will promote his amorous designs to the utmost.

I ne'er refuse my aid when lovers woe;
But just as I'd be done by, so I do.

End of ACT the Second.

ACT III.



ACT III. SCENE I.

An apartment in the house of Sir William Frontlefs.

Sir William, Young Frontlefs.

Young Front. SIR, being inform'd that you desired to speak with me, I am come in order to receive your commands.

Sir Will. My memory fails me in a certain article, so I sent for you to clear up my doubt. Is not Tomlinson the name of the father of the young Lady to whom you are contracted?

Young Front. Yes, Sir, it is.

Sir Will. Is he not an East-India merchant?

Young Front. (*aside*) That question is not ask'd for nothing, I know by the look that accompanies it. (*To Sir William*) Sir, Mr. Tomlinson was formerly an India merchant; but having made a vast fortune by traffic, retir'd to Norfolk, the place of his nativity. He generally passes the winter in town with his family, but an odd accident has lately called him into the country.

Sir Will. I should be glad to know what accident.

Young Front.

Young Front. You must know, Sir, there is an old woman in the neighbourhood, that is generally look'd upon as a witch; the superstitious country people have already put her to several trials, and Mr. Tomlinson, not long since, receiv'd advice, that if he did not go down to the country, and exert his authority as Justice of Peace, her life would be in danger.

Sir Will. This is an odd accident, indeed; I am sorry it should happen just at this time, because I intended to wait upon Mr. Tomlinson myself, and bring the marriage-treaty to a conclusion as soon as possible. Adieu: I must now go into the city about business.

Young Front. Sir, I wish you a good morning.

SCENE II.

Young Frontless, solus.

Young Front. Well, let who will be a witch, I'll swear my father's none: he believes implicitly, let the lies I tell him be ever so improbable. I am impatient to see Shiftwell: he's a fellow of great address, and I don't doubt but he will, by this time, be able to give me some account of the beautiful unknown. I'll go home directly, and wait his coming.

SCENE III.

SCENE III.

Young Frontless's Lodgings in Pall-Mall.

Young Frontless sits at a table, reading; Shiftwell enters.

Young Front. (to Shiftwell, laying aside his book) You come most carefully upon your hour.

Shift. Nay, I think I may say without vanity, that I am as true as the dial to the sun. I have been ever since on foot, making strict enquiry after your mistress, and come fraught with intelligence like a courier from Germany.

Young Front. Then, dear Shiftwell, don't keep me any longer in suspense, but tell all at once, without any other preamble.

Shift. I know lovers cannot brook delays; so, without any farther circumlocution, Sir, your Mistress's name is Sophia Tradelove; daughter to Sir John Tradelove; a wealthy merchant of this city; and she is to have a portion of eight thousand pounds.

Young Front. Shiftwell, you astonish me; this is the very Lady whom my father intended for my wife; he had obtained her father's consent, and all was agreed upon, when I stood in the way of my own happiness. Oh I could bite out this lying tongue, which has brought upon me the greatest of misfortunes.

E

But

But my case is not yet desperate. Tho' I have almost ruin'd myself by lying, I may repair all by telling the truth. From this time forth, I renounce lying; for I find, by sad experience, that the most successful liar, let him impose ever so much upon others, imposes still more upon himself. I'll go directly to my father's, and endeavour to clear up this intricate affair.

Shift. Sir, I wish you success, with all my heart.
[*Exeunt ambo.*]

SCENE IV.

An apartment in Sir William's House.

Sir Willam, and Frontless.

Young Front. Sir, I humbly intreat your forgiveness; but I have grossly imposed upon you, in several particulars. There is no such person as Mr. Tomlinson; I never was contracted to any woman of the name of Lindamira; and the whole is an invention, which I had recourse to, in order to prevent my marriage with Sophia, who was then unknown to me. But now, that I am no stranger to her merit, there is nothing I so ardently desire, as to unite my fate to her's for ever.

Sir Will. And was the story of the Witch an invention too?

Young

Young *Front*. It was, Sir, and many others that I have told you. Scarce has there past a day, without my telling you some falsehood. I have long since contracted an unhappy habit of lying, tho' quite free from malice.

Sir *Will*. But pray, Sir, as you have told me so many lies already, what reason can I have to think you tell truth now?

Young *Front*. Must I then swear?

Sir *Will*. Nay, I'd as soon believe you upon your word, as your oath; for I think one as little to be depended upon as the other. I am even in doubt, whether I should believe you to be a liar, since you assert it yourself.

Young *Front*. Oh father, do not drive me to despair. Do but intercede for me with Sir John Tradelove; he formerly consented to my marriage with his daughter, and there is nothing I more ardently wish. Sure he must excuse the innocent artifice I made use of, in order to break off the match, when he knows that I was prompted to it by my love for Sophia. Before it was proposed to me, I had seen her at public places, without knowing her name, and her divine perfections made such an impression upon my soul, that I could not bear the thoughts of marrying any other woman. It was this that made me have recourse to the story of a contract with Lindamira Tomlinson.

Sir *Will*. Well, Sir, this is all very plausible;

ble; but who can believe a notorious liar in any thing? I know your lies are all very well invented, you are very ingenious that way.

Young *Front*. Sir, do not treat me with so much rigour—Speak in my favour to Sir John.

Sir *Will*. I would not for the world; speak to him yourself, and get his consent if you can; but for my part, I will never persuade another to believe what I do not believe myself.

Young *Front*. You reduce me to despair.

Sir *Will*. Here comes Sir John Tradelove and his fair daughter; exert all your eloquence, and plead your cause as well as you can. I shall stand by to observe what passes, and if I say nothing for you, at least I shall say nothing against you.

SCENE V.

Sir William Frontless, Young Frontless, Sir John Tradelove, and Sophia.

(Sophia blushes, and discovers some confusion upon seeing Young Frontless.)

Young *Front*. (*addressing himself to Sir John Tradelove*), O! Sir, have compassion upon one, who is become the most unhappy of mankind by his own fault. The beauteous Sophia was destin'd to my arms; but I, having never seen her, invented a story of a contract, to prevent a match, which, I now con-
sider

sider as the height of earthly blifs. I can, however, plead in excuse, that it was owing to the charms of Sophia herself, that I endeavour'd to avoid a marriage with Sophia. I had seen her at the Play-house, without knowing her name, and could not bear the thoughts of living for any other woman but her.

Sir John. Sir William, what do you say to this? do you give credit to this account of the matter?

Sir Will. I desire to be excus'd from declaring my opinion in this matter.

Sir John. Nay, that's unreasonable, we are both equally interested in this affair.

Sir Will. Then, since I must give my opinion, I solemnly declare, that I don't believe one word Jack says.

Young Front. Confusion! my father himself adds to my afflictions: how unnatural!

Sir John (to young Frontless). Sir, I am sorry I am under a necessity of saying what, perhaps, you may be unwilling to hear; but really I have some doubt remaining with regard to what you advance; and my daughter's repose is so precious to me, that I never will venture it upon an uncertainty. The step you have taken is of such a nature, as must make your sincerity for ever be call'd in question. When your father propos'd the match to you, you might

might have declin'd it, without having recourse to falsehood; he had no intention to put any constraint upon your inclination.

Sir *Will.* No, No, I never had, Sir John: Jack knows very well, that I have always been an indulgent father to him, I have always plac'd the utmost confidence in him, and always liv'd with him as if he had been my brother more than my son; and for that very reason I am the more offended at his wearing two faces with me.

Young *Front.* Appearances are against me, I must own; but tho' you obstinately refuse to hear my defence, I doubt not but accident, or time, will justify me sooner or later. (*Prepares to go, meets Shiftwell at the door, receives a letter from him, and returns*).

S C E N E *the last.*

Sir William, Young Frontless, Sir John, Sophia, and Shiftwell.

Young *Front.* I can now produce a witness in my behalf. I have employ'd this man as one I could depend upon, in order to procure intelligence. If you will but give yourselves the trouble to ask him a few questions, you will soon see my conduct in a different light from what you do at present. Shiftwell, don't disguise a single circumstance of the truth

truth from these gentlemen, for you will greatly injure me thereby.

Shiftwell. Sir, I shall speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Sir John. Did Mr. Frontless ever tell you he was in love with one Miss Lindamira Tomlinson.

Shiftwell. No, Sir, but he sent me to enquire about a young lady whom he was greatly enamour'd of, tho' he did not know her name. I found her out by the description, and gave her the letter which he wrote to her. The servant gave me the answer, and I put it into his hand just as I came in.

Young Front. Here it is, Sir.

Sir John (*opens the letter, and reads it*) Well, daughter, I believe you were made for each other; so, if *Sir William* will give his consent, I'll readily give mine.

Sir Will. I give my consent, and I hope they may long live happy and blessed in each other.

Young Front. My happiness must now be compleat, since I am blest'd in the possession of my charming Sophia.

Sir Will. Well, Jack, you have got over this troublesome affair; but you must take care how you tell any more lies.

Young Front. I have now nothing farther to wish; possess'd of my Sophia, I am happy
beyond

beyond my most sanguine hopes. Come then,
my charming Sophia, we will die and live
together.

I often lied to win you to my arms;
But I'm all truth, now I possess your charms.

FINIS.